

March
~~JANUARY~~ 11, 1960

Mr. George Derbyshire
Space Science Board
National Academy of Sciences
1145 19 Street NW
Washington 6, D.C.

Dear George--

Sorry to have to bother you when you must be just recovering from the Board meeting and its preparation.

I mentioned over the phone to you (or to Hugh) that the Russian microbiologist A. A. Imshenetskii is visiting this country under the auspices of the NRC and of the Society of American Bacteriologists. He is the director of the Institute of Microbiology of the Academy of Sciences, USSR.

During his visit to California, March 28-31 this month, he is being looked after by Dr. Roger Stanier at Berkeley, whom you may remember as an erstwhile member of Westex. As Imshenetskii's name has recently figured in reports of USSR plans for exobiology, Roger thought it would be especially apropos for us all to get together, and especially with Van Niel at Pacific Grove, whom Imshenetskii is especially anxious to visit. If it can be worked out we would all drive down together on Thursday March 31, and back again to Berkeley.

The snag is that Pacific Grove (probably as a match for some Crimean resorts) is on our retaliatory proscribed list for Russian visitors. I am writing to ask whether it would be possible to get the Board, on behalf of the Academy, to ask State to waive the ban for this occasion, in view of the possible specific benefits of our communication in these circumstances. There is no guarantee that we will learn anything from Imshenetskii during such a visit, but if we don't get together, the chance will be less. In view of the very poor communication until now -- which may be partly due to the sparseness of occasions for informal contacts among the right people,-- I hope that special weight would be given to facilitating this day's trip.

Yours sincerely,


Joshua Lederberg